

APPROPRIATIONS REQUEST FORM OREGON HOUSE DELEGATION FISCAL YEAR 2011

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION: FEBRUARY 23, 2010

PLEASE NOTE: As required by the House Appropriations Committee, all requests will be made public on the requesting Member's website.

1. Project Title:

Mercy Corps Action Center: Global Fluency for Our Youth

2. Organization Name and address

Mercy Corps, 45 SW Ankeny, Portland, OR 97204

3. Primary Contact name, phone number, mobile phone number, fax number and email:

Julie Mancini: 503 896-5702; jmancini@mercycorps.org, Fax: 503-896-5011

4. Project Location Address (if different from Organization):

Project addresses:

Mercy Corps Action Center
Skidmore Fountain Building
28 SW First Avenue
Portland, OR 97204

5. Please describe the requesting organization's main activities, and whether it is a public, private non-profit, or private for-profit entity

A private non-profit organization, Mercy Corps works amid disasters, conflicts, chronic poverty and instability to unleash the potential of people who can win against nearly impossible odds. Since 1979, Mercy Corps has provided \$1.5 billion in assistance to people in 106 nations. Supported by headquarters offices in North America and Europe, the agency's unified global programs employ 3,500 staff worldwide and reach nearly 16.4 million people in more than 35 countries.

6. Briefly describe the activity or project for which funding is requested (please keep to 500 words or less.)

The Action Center is Mercy Corps' public outreach space dedicated to educating and engaging visitors – especially young people – about the world around them. Programming is focused on connecting the local to the global through programs and classes for youth and adults. Opened in October 9, 2009, the Action Center inhabits the first floor of Mercy Corps' new global headquarters, in Portland's Old Town/China Town District. 40,000 students, family members, tourists, business-

professionals and public-service colleagues are expected to visit the center this year. We are requesting \$175,000 to support updated and expanded digital content, curated exhibitions and educational programming.

Global Fluency

Drawing on the resources listed below, the core program is our K5-12 curricula and on-site classes, developed through partnerships with school districts. In the four months since we opened, two thirds of our 9,200 visitors have been students on scheduled trips to participate in workshops led by our Action Center educator. These classes involve students from the larger metropolitan area; this grant would enable us to use our website and video conferencing equipment to connect students in Oregon's rural communities with each other and/or Portland, and with students around the world, in structured conversations about global issues.

A Newsroom/Classroom

The Action Center features interactive, multimedia content, including live news-feeds, Google Earth mapping technology, and video testimony from people across the planet on issues such as HIV/AIDS, climate change and poverty. Participants learn about challenges and possible solutions, gaining a deeper look into a given country's sociopolitical and global position. We plan to design new exhibits on an ongoing basis, including those that highlight Pacific Northwest issues and solutions.

The Center's Action Stations offer eight PCs with an evolving menu of volunteer options that enable visitors to transform their interest into participation. Users are provided with a list of possible actions, such as sending an agricultural tool-kit to a needy family abroad or volunteering in a local non-profit engaged in fighting poverty.

Other Programs

On view through April is the Smithsonian's *Design for the Other 90%*, a collection of 37 "disruptive innovations" that demonstrate how the world's best designers can change life for the world's poor. We plan to bring more exhibits like this that attract industry professionals, students and teachers throughout Portland and the state.

The Action Center is a meeting place and conduit for Mercy Corps' international youth leadership forum, Global Citizen Corps (GCC). Linking students together across continents, GCC also provides them with valuable skills to lead service projects in their own communities and schools. Participants video-conference with peers in other countries such as Lebanon and Iraq. GCC has worked in over 30 schools in the Portland area and has reached thousands of students in 130 countries. The Action Center will integrate content from Mercy Corps' college-level blog Global Envision, a website devoted to news and discussions about economic development. The Center and our lecture hall are available to other service organizations at little or no cost to further enhance the center's reach and educational offerings.

7. Has this project received federal appropriations funding in past fiscal years?

No

- 7a. **If yes, please provide fiscal year, Department, Account, and funding amount of any previous funding.**

N/A

8. **Federal agency and account from which funds are requested (Please be specific – e.g. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Economic Development Initiatives account):**

- a. Labor, HHS, Education-Public Health Improvement and Leadership (\$75,000)
- b. Labor, HHS, Education-IMLS Museums and Libraries (\$100,000)

9. **What is the purpose of the project? Why is it a valuable use of taxpayer funds? How will the project support efforts to improve the economy and create jobs in Oregon?**

A 2006 study by National Association of International Educators revealed that 90% of Americans polled believe it is 'important' or 'very important' to prepare future generations of Americans for a global society. Still, because of a lack of education and insufficient and or imbalanced media coverage, Americans continue to largely misunderstand the world at large. A *National Geographic* survey found one in seven American high-school students could locate Iran or Iraq on a map. More than twice as many students could name the island location of the most recent episode of *Survivor* than could locate Israel or Afghanistan on a map.

The purpose of the Action Center is education – about the world, about our part in it and our affect on it. The Center aims to make global challenges and opportunities real and relevant to the American public. The Action Center is an ideal platform for global education: As the public-outreach space for a large NGO (3,500 employees worldwide) headquartered in Portland, Oregon, the Action Center has the advantage of first-hand knowledge and experience with more than 106 countries in its 30-year history – experience that is documented for viewing in the Action Center as well as by major network and cable news stations on the evening news.

The recent economic downturn demonstrated more than ever that we are global citizens, whether we live in Estacada, Oregon, or Calcutta, India. We know that a deeper understanding of different cultures and global issues brings about a desire to work on the challenges; at the very least it develops aware citizens and prepares a culturally competent workforce that can compete in a global economy, both abroad and at home.

The Action Center is a valuable use of taxpayers' funds because it centralizes and orders information about the world around issues of poverty, climate change, economic development, and disaster assistance into a format that gives tens of thousands of people the opportunity to find ways to meet needs in their community, country and the world. It helps prepare our youth for future employers who will insist upon an understanding of the global economy and different sociopolitical arenas, and fluency with other languages and cultures. Following the most mundane local act – discarding

a plastic bottle, purchasing fish at the market – to its global conclusion is an intriguing and illuminating journey, and one that we rarely make.

There is no other public space in this region that answers our community's need for global education and engagement and no other classroom that offers such poignant and practical information. The Mercy Corps Action Center provides current information and service opportunities and a variety of ongoing programs and events. It offers Oregon youth a social studies lab, an international youth leadership program and a university-level forum on global economic development to form a progressive array of opportunities for learning and action in a complex and changing world. It is a low cost effort for a high-return in civic engagement.

Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, fighting climate change, providing a meaningful alternative to extremist movements, clearing the way for hope and a future for youth—all of these efforts demand both direct assistance in developing countries and engagement of Americans here at home.

The first, critical step is education.

10. Have you requested funding for this project from other Members of Congress? If so, who?

No

11. Funding Details:

a. Total project cost (all funding sources and all years): \$595,000

b. Amount being requested for this project in Fiscal Year 2011: \$175,000

The requested funding will allow us to enhance and expand our media and exhibition offerings to include curriculum and exhibitions focused on Oregon and the Pacific Northwest. It will also allow us to have sufficient staff in place to meet the demands of visitors, whether student or adult. Coming during the critical second year of this initiative, this funding will enable the Action Center to deepen and widen its base of support in the Portland area, and thus contribute significantly to the longer term sustainability of this unique and valuable community resource.

c. What other funding sources (local, regional, state) are contributing to this project or activity? (Please provide specific dollar amount or percentage.)

Italicized names are OR sources; bold names are private sources

Primary Funding Sources During FY10	Amount
Wal-Mart	\$50,000
ODS	\$30,000
Lemmelson Foundation	\$20,000
Miller Foundation	\$25,000
W+K	\$5,000
KPFF	\$5,000
ZGF	\$5,000
Hoffman Construction	\$5,000
Vesta	\$5,000
McKinstry	\$5,000
Glumac	\$5,000
Private Donors	\$50,000
Total Funds Committed	\$210,000

d. Do you expect to request federal funding in future years for this project?

No

**e. Breakdown/budget of the amount you are requesting for this project in FY 2011.
(e.g. salary \$40,000; computer \$3,000):**

Salary:

Operations/Programming Manager salary (partial)	\$25,000
Education Officer salary (partial)	\$25,000
IT Specialist/Content Manager salary (partial)	\$25,000

Program Support:

Exhibition design and fabrication	\$100,000
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TOTAL: \$175,000

f. Please list public or private organizations that have supported/endorsed this project:

City Club of Portland
Governor Ted Kulongoski
Mayor Sam Adams
Carole Smith: Superintendent of Portland Public Schools
Beverly Dagget: Social Studies lead for all PPS middle and high schools
Oregon Food Bank
Hands On Portland
Saturday Academy

World Affairs Council
Portland Saturday Market
University of Oregon
World Affairs Council of Oregon
Portland State University
Portland Public Schools
China Town Neighborhood Association

g. Is this project scalable? (i.e. if partial funding is awarded, will the organization be able to use the funds in FY 2011?):

Yes

Please return this form no later than February 23, 2010 (via email) to:
appropriations.blumenauer@mail.house.gov